



INFLUENZA ACTIVITY SUMMARY 2001 - 2002 (October 31, 2002)

Time to prepare!

Acute Communicable Disease Control (ACDC) has not yet confirmed the presence of influenza in Los Angeles County (LAC). However, the first California case of influenza (type B) was recently identified in Orange County (on 10-21-02) and the CDC has reported sporadic influenza activity across the United States (see Figure below). In addition, ACDC has received reports of respiratory syncytial virus activity in LAC which suggest that influenza and other seasonal respiratory illnesses are just around the corner.

The following are a few highlights to keep in mind for the upcoming influenza season.

Vaccine supply is plentiful.

Unlike the previous two seasons, this season there will be no vaccine delays and no need to postpone vaccination. "High risk" individuals should be vaccinated as soon as possible – this includes individuals at highest risk for influenza-related complications such as persons 65 years and older, those with chronic medical conditions, the immunocompromised, and pregnant women in their second or third trimester.

Information regarding the LAC Department of Health Services Public Health annual influenza campaign is available by calling 1-800-427-8700 and available at:

<http://lapublichealth.org/ip/flu/2002-2003.htm>

Vaccination for children is encouraged.

Because of the high rates of influenza-related morbidity and mortality among children during the last influenza season, the CDC is now encouraging the vaccination of children; in fact, for the first time this season, infants aged 6 months to 24 months have been added to the list of those who may receive first priority vaccination.

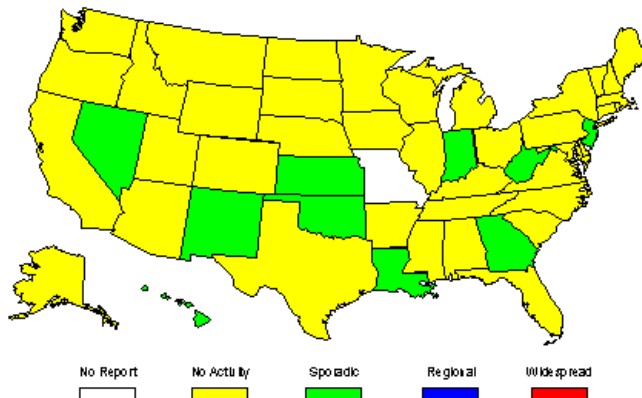
Be on guard for type B influenza.

While type A influenza strains are typically more prevalent than type B, there has been an especially high proportion of type B influenza within LAC for the past two influenza seasons. This trend may continue this season as well. The type of influenza strain is important since some rapid tests and antiviral medications are only effective in the identification and treatment of type A strains. Descriptions of differing testing procedures and antiviral medications are available on the CDC website at:

<http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/diseases/flu/fluvirus.htm>

**Weekly Influenza Activity Estimates Reported
by State & Territorial Epidemiologists**

Week ending October 19, 2002 - Week 42



As of week 42 (ending 10-19-02) influenza activity was reported as sporadic in 10 states (Georgia, Hawaii, Indiana, Kansas, Louisiana, Nevada, New Jersey, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and West Virginia) and Washington, D.C.

**Outbreaks of influenza and other respiratory illnesses
are reportable under state law (California Code of Regulations 2500).**

To report an outbreak, call the Communicable Disease Reporting System Hotline at 888-397-3993.